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The Signal



Friday, September 16, 2005

Published for the Department of Defense and the Fort Gordon community

Vol. 25, No. 37

News UPDATE

POW/MIA program

The POW/MIA Recognition Ceremony is at 10:30 a.m. **today** at the POW/MIA Monument, located at the intersection of Chamberlain Avenue and Kilbourne Street. For details call 791-3702.

Hispanic heritage

The Hispanic Heritage Month command program is 1:30 p.m. **Thursday** in Alexander Hall.

The guest speaker is Carlos Antonio Barreras, president of The Hispanic-American Cultural Association. There will also be a performance by The Ballet Mexicano de Lupita Sosa.

For information call Richard Mitchell at 791-6648.

Oktoberfest

The Fort Gordon Oktoberfest is **Sept. 30 to Oct. 1** at Barton Field. Activities include a carnival, food and drink sales, music and more.

Reunion ball

The 551st Signal Battalion will hold its first Alumni Ball at 6 p.m. **Sept. 23** at the Gordon Club.

Veterans from WWII to the present are invited to attend. Cost is \$20; for ticket information call Sgt. Tiasha Russell at 791-6079.

Arts festival

The annual Arts in the Heart of Augusta art festival is **today** through **Sunday** at the Augusta Commons (see page 6).

The festival showcases the visual and performing arts, and presents performances by local, regional and national entertainers throughout the weekend.

Hours are 5-9 p.m. Friday, 11 a.m.-9 p.m. Saturday and noon-7 p.m. Sunday.

A badge good for weekend admission is \$5 at the gate; \$4 in advance at SRP Federal Credit Union locations.

Job fair workshop

Army Career and Alumni Program is having a job fair preparation workshop at the ACAP Center from 10 a.m.-noon **Wednesday**.

To register for one of the workshops, call 791-7333.

Flea market

The Fort Gordon Service Club is hosting its annual fall flea market from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. **Oct. 1** at Barton Field.

Booth spaces may be purchased at the PX from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. today, Saturday and Sept. 23, 24, 28 and 30, and cost \$15-\$45.

For information call 791-2702 or 284-7618.

Getting signal through after Katrina

67th provides communications for hurricane-ravaged gulf

Kristy Davies

Signal staff

While Hurricane Katrina was pounding the Gulf Coast, the 67th Signal Battalion, part of the 93rd Signal Brigade here, was already on alert to go into action. The 67th deployed to the devastated area Aug. 30 to do what they do best: communications.

"We were the first Soldiers to deploy from Fort Gordon in support of the hurricane," said Lt. Col. Michael Plummer, 67th Signal Battalion commander. "We left at 5:30 a.m. on that Tuesday (after the storm hit)."

"We knew we would be supporting the First Army, commanded by (Lt. Gen. Russel Honoré)," added Plummer.

The 67th initially sent 44 Soldiers to Camp Shelby, Miss., a training post primarily for the National Guard. The camp is also a mobilization center and was the nearest military location where a command post could be set up that did not encroach upon civilians.

"We were the first people from (Joint Task Force-Katrina) there so at that point I had (my) Soldiers with 24 members of the First Army staff," said Plummer. "We were the initial ones who went in and started hooking up the

building, setting up what was going to be the base for the (First Army headquarters)."

Plummer returned for medical reasons, leaving his executive officer in charge of the Soldiers remaining at Camp Shelby.

The 67th set up a data package to allow Honoré the ability to communicate through commercial telephones, e-mail and video teleconferences.

"It wasn't just military people...I saw teams from South Carolina, a few vehicles from Georgia and (Federal Emergency Management Agency) definitely had representation there," added Plummer.

"Since we were dealing with a lot of civilian and non-Army agencies, (we had) to give them the ability to talk back to whatever states or organizations they came from...pulling in a lot of commercial access," explained Plummer. "That was something we're very capable of doing, but we don't normally bring in that much commercial access."

The data package the 67th uses for setting up communication in combat or in situations such as JTF-Katrina, comes with a phone and internet capability, both secure and non-secure, and can be set up anywhere in the world to bring



Photo by Lt. Col. Michael Plummer

The 67th Signal Battalion set up a communication operations center at Camp Shelby, Miss., following Hurricane Katrina's deadly rampage through the Gulf Coast.

services to any organization they are supporting. The package has video teleconferencing capability as well.

"We set up a VTC that we hosted at our site that included Lt. Gen. Honoré, the (U.S. Northern Command) commander and the president and his staff," said Plummer with a smile. "It was kind of neat being a fly on the wall (during the VTC). It's a full motion video and you're seeing the president there interact with Lt. Gen. Honoré who is sitting at his table with his staff."

"Our Soldiers are there to provide communications to enable those people to direct

the clean up teams," said Plummer.

For the 67th it was a unique experience to be supporting Americans in the homeland rather than in a foreign country.

"These were American people, so motivation is high and it just feels good to be helping Americans directly," said Plummer. "These are the people who stood by the sides of the road waving American flags to support the Soldiers. Just being able to go back and help those people who have been supporting us in what we've been doing, to me, that is probably the most satisfying and

rewarding thing to do."

Currently, the 67th has 72 Soldiers deployed to JTF-Katrina in addition to approximately 10 Soldiers from the 93rd and 105 Soldiers from the 56th Signal Battalion, also part of the 93rd, who are in the area of New Orleans and Baton Rouge, La.

"I think we're doing great strides in helping our own people," said Col. Mark Calvo, 93rd Signal Brigade deputy commander. "This will always be remembered in the eyes of the American people for many years to come."

See Relief, page 8



Photo by Michael Johnson/MEJPHOTO

Ripken baseball comes to area

Col. Jack Bryant, U.S. Army Signal Center and Fort Gordon chief of staff, presented a commander's coin to baseball legend and certain future Hall of Fame member Cal Ripken, Jr. Sept. 8. Bryant represented the command at a luncheon held at the Pinnacle Club, hosted by interim Augusta Mayor Willie Mays. Ripken and his company, Ripken Baseball, Inc. of Aberdeen, Md., recently announced purchase of the Augusta GreenJackets baseball team, effective next season. Area elected and media officials, service organizations and other local leaders met with Ripken to welcome him to the CSRA.

\$1M kennel opens

Charmain Z. Brackett

Contributing writer

Some of Fort Gordon's bomb and narcotic sniffing dogs got a reprieve from the heat this summer.

A new \$1 million kennel with climate control runs was completed around the end of July.

"We moved in early because the heat was so bad," said Sgt. 1st Class Tyshawn Anthony, kennel master.

On Sept. 9, post officials cut the rib-

bon and took a tour of the new facility.

"It's very exciting to have this opportunity to open the new facility. It's easy to see why the new facility was needed as you take a look at the before and after," said Col. Karen S. Adams, garrison commander.

The buildings formerly used as the kennel and office space are smaller; the roof leaks; there's no climate control and no insulation, said Anthony.

See Kennels, page 6



Photo by Kristy Davies

Sgt. Michael Bombarger (left) military working dog Bino and Sgt. Matt Lewis demonstrate what the dogs are trained to do.

New communications equipment tested at battle lab

Charmain Z. Brackett

Contributing writer

The newest in communications technology is being tested at Fort Gordon's Battle Command Battle Lab.

"We're testing mobile satellite communications," said Maj. Clay Campbell, an exchange officer from Australia.

In today's battlefield, up-to-date mobile communications

including voice, video and data are vital.

"It should reduce casualties and risks when communication is better," he said.

A problem with mobile satellite technology develops when the receiver on a Humvee goes behind a building or in a tunnel in urban terrains. The system hangs up and computers must be rebooted.

If the signal is interrupted

during a video conference in the newer systems being tested, the picture pauses and then resumes once the signal is restored.

To see how quickly the newer technology responds, field tests are being conducted.

"We're going to be testing them, putting them in a Humvee and driving around here and driving around Augusta," said

Maj. Scott Youngson, a British exchange officer.

All of the technology being tested is commercially produced.

The difference between the modems and other pieces of the system tested by Battle Lab and other commercial off-the-shelf technology is the security feature.

"We need secure lines," said Campbell. "You're almost look-

ing at two different systems when you have to have cryptography. We can't do without."

Testing of the equipment should take place over the next few months.

When the testing is complete, the officers will supply vendors with an evaluation of the product letting them know what worked well and what didn't work.

Blood center joins new program

Charmain Z. Brackett
Contributing writer

On Tuesday, students from the 447th Signal Battalion packed into the Kendrick Memorial Blood Center awaiting their turn to give blood.

It didn't seem any different to Pvt. Aaron Richards who has given blood three times in the past few months; however, some of the blood donated Tuesday would be processed a little differently at Fort Gordon and then frozen at Armed Services Whole Blood Processing Laboratory at McGuire Air Force Base, N.J.

Last week, Kendrick became the only Army blood collection center to participate in the ASWBPL frozen blood program, said Erin Hawkins, blood donor recruiter.

"The Navy has been doing it quite some time because their carriers are at sea sometimes for many months," she said. "We are the only Army site, and there's one Air Force site."

Kendrick has had the highest blood collection in the Army over the past two years, she added.

Hawkins said the staff has known for a few months about the program. Special equipment was needed, and the staff needed additional training.

The blood that will be frozen is placed in a different type of bag, Hawkins said. While the bag is larger, less blood is contained in the bag because ASWBPL personnel must add a chemical to help the blood freeze without destroying the red blood cells.

Most of the blood that will be frozen is type O although some type A will be frozen. Frozen blood can last up to 10 years;



Photo by Charmain Brackett

Processed blood at Kendrick Memorial Blood Center awaits shipment to the Armed Forces Whole Blood Processing Lab. Some of the blood from the center will be frozen. Kendrick is the only collecting site in the Army which will have its blood used for the frozen blood program.

whereas fresh blood only last 42 days. Once blood is thawed, it must be used quickly, she said.

Type O blood can be given in critical situations when there is no time to wait for the results of a blood typing test.

Hawkins said that new donors are always needed as there are restrictions on who can donate. People who have been deployed to Iraq, for example, must wait a year before they can donate blood.

Retirees, family members and Department of Army civilians are eligible to donate blood at the center.

Beginning in October, the blood center will team up with the credit union for the Red to Green program in which the credit union will donate \$5 to Christmas House for every pint of blood donated.

While it usually only takes about 45 minutes to complete the blood donation process, Hawkins suggests people call before they head to the blood center on their lunch hour.

If a blood drive is taking place, the wait could be longer. Anyone interested in holding a blood drive should call Hawkins at 787-1014.

Instructors honored at recognition ball

Tammy Moehlman
Staff writer

Instructors gathered for a ball in their honor Friday at the Gordon Club. The ball was the first ever held to spotlight the efforts of instructors on Fort Gordon and was hosted by the 15th Regimental Signal Brigade Office of the Dean and the Training Divisions.

"My dean team, Mr. Holmes, who is the 15th Signal Brigade dean, and the dean sergeant major, Sgt. Maj. Russell, they brought forth the idea. I think it was a collaboration of a lot of the folks in the school houses and especially Sgt. Maj. Russell," said Col. Lori L. Sussman, 15th Signal Brigade commander. "He just took off with this idea and brought it to what we see today, which is going to be a fabulous event with 400 plus people celebrating the important role of the instructor."

Instructors from Fort Gordon were invited to the ball to recognize the importance of

the work they do and honor the various instructors of the quarter for 2005 and the instructor of the year. About 430 tickets were sold for the event.

"We're going to recognize the instructors of the year from the large units...the 15th, (Leader College for Information Technology), (Regimental Noncommissioned Officers Academy), and I think we're going to be announcing the Fort Gordon Instructor of the Year

as well tonight," said Sussman. General Dynamics instructors of the quarter were also recognized.

Maj. Gen. Dennis Moran was the guest speaker for the event. Moran is the vice director for Command, Control, Communications and Computer Systems (J6).

"It shows how important instructors are that our Vice J6 – the number two guy in (Department of Defense) for communications – is here with us," re-

marked Sussman.

Brig. Gen. Randolph Strong, U.S. Army Signal Center and Fort Gordon commander was a part of the award ceremony. Other guests included Col. Ronald Bouchard, Fort Gordon's new deputy commander and assistant commander.

At the ball, Staff Sgt. Michael January, 15th RSB, was named the Fort Gordon Instructor of the Year.

See Instructors, page 13



Photo by Tammy Moehlman

About 400 people attended the first instructor's ball Friday at the Gordon Club.

Post color guard explains flag etiquette for Scouts

Charmain Z. Brackett
Contributing writer

Although Isabelle Unger knew a little bit about the care of the American flag, a lesson from the Fort Gordon Color Guard didn't hurt the 8-year-old.

"I already knew this, but I learned that the flag should never touch the ground," she said.

The color guard presented a lesson in flag etiquette at Brownie Girl Scout Troop 307's first meeting of the year Sept. 6 at Stevens Creek Elementary School.

"With Patriots Day, we thought it would be important for the girls to learn about the flag," said troop co-leader, Cathy Brown. "It's a neat way to kick off the year."

The duty was a change of pace for the color guard. Members serve for three months and are about half way through their commitment.

Staff Sgt. Derrick Dodds, the non-commissioned officer in charge, said the group had performed 47 funerals in just 45 days and been in numerous ceremonies. Collectively, the members have logged more than 12,000 miles.

"This is the first time as a team, we've come out and done something for a civic organization," he said.

The experience was "exhilarating," he said.

While he doesn't take his task of honoring deceased veterans lightly, Dodds said he enjoyed the time with the Brownie scouts and hoped that he and the other color guard members left them with a "sense of honor and pride in our country's flag."

Dodds and team members demon-



Photo by Charmain Brackett

Members of the Fort Gordon Color Guard show a group of Brownie Girl Scouts the proper way to fold an American flag.

strated the proper way to hang a flag and how to fold it. Then the scouts were divided into two groups, and the girls got to fold the flag.

The folded flag was a surprise for 8-year-old Elizabeth Brown who didn't realize "that the flag has to be folded in a triangle."

Dodds said he hoped the event

would be a way to allay fears the children might have had about Soldiers or the military. Sometimes what they see on the news can be frightening to them, he said.

The 8-year-olds didn't seem to have any fear of the color guard members.

Isabelle was glad for their visit and said she "loved them."

DoD encourages relief volunteers

Donna Miles
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON – In light of the ongoing need for volunteers to support hurricane relief efforts in the Gulf, the Defense Department is encouraging its federal civilian employees to consider participating.

In a Sept. 8 memo to department leaders, David S. C. Chu, undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness, urged DoD employees to offer their services, as long as it doesn't impact on their immediate defense mission.

In a related move, Chu announced DoD's participation in an emergency leave transfer program to help employees affected by Hurricane Katrina. That measure, authorized throughout the federal government by President Bush, will allow DoD civilian employees to donate unused annual leave to other federal civilian employees who need more time off from work due to the hurricane.

DoD components are establishing programs and are expected to begin seeking leave donors as well as requests for help soon.

In his memo regarding the volunteer program, Chu noted that the Department of Homeland Security anticipates the need for 2,000 volunteers to help with the federal government's response and recovery efforts under way. As a result, he said, the Federal Emergency Management Agency is offering federal civilian employees the opportunity to volunteer for 14- to 30-day deployments to affected areas to help support DoD efforts.

Volunteers will remain on the DoD payrolls and will be in a temporary-duty status while performing volunteer service, he said.

Mark Smith from the Defense Civilian Personnel Management Service said he expects the program to become an ongoing effort between DoD and FEMA, with ongoing volunteer rotations for the foreseeable future.

While encouraging employees to volunteer, Chu emphasized that they must receive their supervisor's approval before volunteering, and that their temporary absence from the workplace "cannot diminish or compromise service or support to our critical DoD mission."

Volunteers must go through their DoD component point of contact, not FEMA, to offer their services, Smith emphasized.

Details about both the leave-donation and volunteer programs are posted at the DoD Civilian Personnel Management Service's Web site, www.cpms.osd.mil, under the "Hurricane Katrina" link. The site also includes points of contact within DoD about where to apply for the volunteer program, Smith said.

All volunteers must be physically able to work outdoors all day in a disaster area, with long work hours under arduous conditions, officials said. They also must require no refrigeration for medications.

Skills particularly in demand are bilingual capabilities in all languages, a commercial driver's license, logistics capabilities and expertise in information technology, officials said.

Pair of Soldiers receive Heart

Jennifer Chipman
EAMC Public Affairs

Two more Soldiers were awarded the Purple Heart Medal Sept. 7 in a ceremony held in the Eisenhower Army Medical Center auditorium.

Sgt. Alfred Cooper from Bessemer, Ala., and Spc. Dennis Holt from Nashville, Tenn., were awarded their Purple Hearts by Col. Stephen Oswald, medical center acting commander.

Cooper was mobilized with the Alabama National Guard in January 2005 to serve on convoy duty, road reconnaissance and raids on insurgents. On Aug. 20, he was involved with

suppressing enemy fire when his unit came under mortar attack. Cooper sustained injuries to his hands and legs.

Holt was mobilized with the Tennessee National Guard in June 2004 and was deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom in November 2004. On March 20 he was a passenger in a convoy headed to a forward observation base when his vehicle was heavily damaged by an improvised explosive device. He sustained injuries to his left foot.

Both Soldiers complimented the staff of EAMC for their excellent medical care and support while they were patients at the medical center.



Photo by Paul Clayton

Sgt. Alfred Cooper (left) and Spc. Dennis Holt were awarded the Purple Heart Medal Sept. 7 for injuries they sustained in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.



Photo by Kristy Davies

In memory

President George W. Bush ordered flags at military installations flown at half-staff through Sept. 13 to honor Chief Justice William Rehnquist, and Sept. 14 to 20 to honor those lost in Hurricane Katrina.

Viewpoint

Information, Opinions, and Commentary

Commentary: Will America ever forget 9-11?

Gary Sheftick
Army News Service

WASHINGTON – How long does it take to forget a tragedy like Sept. 11, 2001? That question entered my mind as I attended a memorial service in the Pentagon auditorium to observe the fourth anniversary of the terrorist attack there in which 184 service members and civilian employees lost their lives.

It was a service that brought back memories and emotions that I hadn't felt in some time.

I had almost forgotten the confusion of that day and the sorrow that followed for those who didn't make it; and the guilt for not being able to

help them. When their portraits flashed one-by-one on the screen at the front of the auditorium, though, those feelings returned with a sting.

I remembered the terrible burns of some survivors; the coughing and lung ailments developed by some of the rescue workers who sifted through the smoking rubble.

I couldn't help but remember the memorial service a month after the attack when about 10,000 Pentagon workers and family members attended a ceremony led by President Bush on the parade field in front of the River Entrance.

I remembered the thousands cheering when President Bush pledged action against those who perpetrated the

attack, and promised that America "will never forget" those who gave their lives.

And I remembered the first anniversary observance, also led by the president and attended by thousands who sat in a temporary stadium built near the site where the high-jacked airliner hit the building.

Then I looked around the Pentagon service during the fourth anniversary, and noticed that it was attended by fewer than 100 military members and civilians.

I wondered if four years was long enough for some to forget? I wondered how many who lived through that day at the Pentagon had gone on to other assignments, perhaps in Iraq

or Afghanistan? I wondered how many were trying to forget the pain or were just too busy with work in the war on terror to attend a Monday memorial service?

In fairness, I knew that thousands had attended the "America Supports You Freedom Walk" organized by the Pentagon on Sunday, the actual anniversary of 9-11. Hundreds attended a remembrance service in Kabul, Afghanistan. And no doubt many attended Patriot Day observances all across the nation.

For those who did attend the Pentagon service, it was an emotional experience.

Paul Brady spoke about crawling through the smoke and escaping the

Navy Command Center when the plane hit. Only eight of 34 who were in the command center that morning lived, Brady said, and several of the survivors were badly burned and injured.

Brady spoke of the hate and his desire for revenge following Sept. 11. He said those feelings have now softened, with a Christian re-awakening, to prayer for those who perished – both the victims and perpetrators.

Pentagon Chaplain (Col.) Ralph Benson said "We are a people of hope" when speaking at the service about the enduring American spirit. He added that "When we see tragedy, we remember it and move on..."

Hopefully we will move on, but never forget those who died Sept. 11.

Be smart about providing help to hurricane victims

Lt. Col. Joseph Martin
Air Force Print News

We are living in very difficult times, and the stress levels can get to the breaking point before you realize it.

Just the other day I had to return a brand new television to the Base Exchange I had bought only two days prior. Of course, I then had to wait in line to be served, and to top it off I had a graduation ceremony that I was subsequently late for.

As I was stewing in my

own frustration, I looked up at the TV in the BX customer service area and realized that my problems – however important to me – were trivial.

I had a TV to return; many others lost all their possessions.

I have a home and a family to go to; many are dead and many have had their homes destroyed.

I had a ceremony to attend at which three logistics Airmen graduated; Keesler and many other places will not have such

ceremonies for many months.

We are in fact fortunate, but all is not well.

Our jobs are about to get harder as we support an influx of displaced Americans and additional people either on the base or in the local area who are providing support to the affected area. Give it your all knowing that if the tables were turned, they would do the same for you – we're all Air Force blue.

We all have a chance to

contribute. I was asked today about organizing something in the squadron to make donations to the relief effort. What a great idea, which is best executed by individually making donations to the American Red Cross.

Although donating water, diapers, canned goods and more is a noble gesture, it is extremely difficult to get such products to the affected areas. The Red Cross is ideally situated to use your monetary

contributions to match the requirements on the ground.

Finally, the first responders to this catastrophe are working around the clock in search-and-rescue and recovery operations.

Although our basic military training, skills and work ethic would be of potential benefit, we need to let them do their job. In the coming weeks much work will be done in the affected areas, but your individual presence is not required.

It is unlikely that given the devastation that anyone will be allowed into the area for quite some time. If you were to attempt to go there and "help" you would almost certainly be turned back.

Aside from the lost time on the road, fuel concerns may actually lead to you being stuck many miles from home with no way to return.

Simply put, stay here, work hard, contribute what you can, and pray.

Feedback...

By Tammy Moehlman

Do you plan on helping the hurricane victims and if so, how?



I have helped the hurricane victims by donating almost \$300 and also by helping my church raise shoes, soap, clothes; everything like that, and I plan to keep on doing it.

Spc. Matthew McGowan
447th Signal Battalion



Yes, I plan to donate money to the Red Cross.

Spc. Brenda Jackson
63rd Signal Battalion



I helped by giving back some money, I gave back \$50, to financial aid because that's all I had to give. My family is from Alabama and that's one of the reasons I helped out.

Spc. Deaundre Wilson
67th Signal Battalion



I'm doing clothing and can food drive at my house. I pass out flyers in my neighborhood, Holiday Park, and I've got almost a half of a garage full of stuff that I need to take down to the church.

Sharon Mahoney
Military spouse



I helped by handing out flyers in the neighborhood for the clothes drive.

Johnathan Mahoney
Military family member



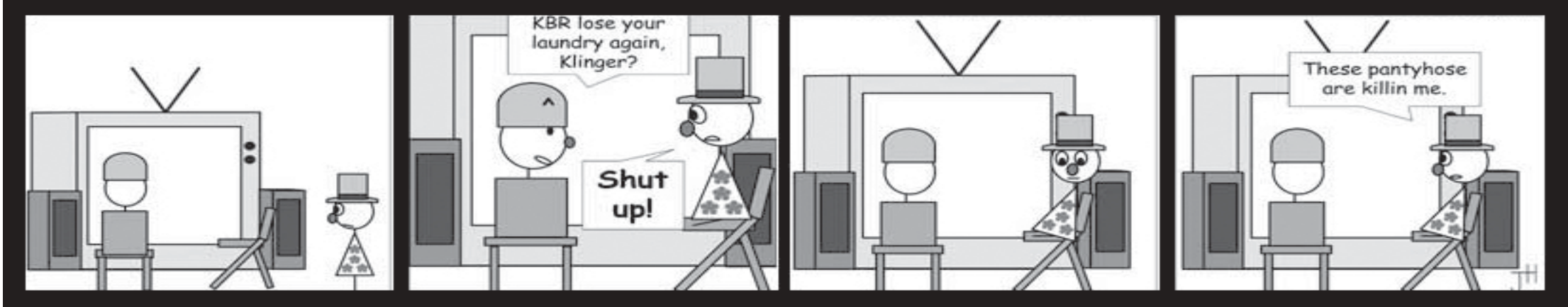
I've basically donated money and I've also purchased supplies and water when I've been in the stores, so that I can send it to them.

1st Lt. Christina Bowser
206th MI Battalion

Downrange

'KBR Laundry Again'

By Jeffery Hall



The Signal

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Former band Soldier recognized

Charmain Z. Brackett
Contributing writer

Sgt. 1st Class Thomas Strayer thought he was just coming to say good-bye to his band buddies on Sept. 8.

In addition to a cigar ash tray and a portrait of the jazz band, he received a few surprises including a bronze Good Citizenship medal and certificate from the Georgia Sons of the American Revolution.

“Sgt. Strayer has worked very, very closely with the Georgia SAR,” said retired Lt. Col. David Titus, SAR state treasurer, who presented him with the medal given in recognition of a citizen’s demonstration of patriotism.

Each year around Valentine’s Day, a ceremony marks the Revolutionary War Battle of Kettle Creek near Washington, Ga., and members of the Fort Gordon Signal Corps Band play selections during the ceremony. The battle was fought on Feb. 14, 1779.

“It was a wonderfully significant event,” Titus said of the battle.

As operations supervisor for the band, Strayer helped coordinate the logistics of getting the band to an area that is still remote in the 21st century and making sure the right mix of music pieces from that time period and other patriotic tunes are played.

Strayer recently retired from the Army after 23 years, having played in the Signal Corps Band for the past four years.

The trumpeter will be sorely missed in his daily duties, according to band master Warrant Officer 1 Jonathan Ward.

“He’s the best of what you can be in the Army,” he said. “He’s got more institutional knowledge. He’s kept us in good standing for a long time.”



Photo by Charmain Brackett

Retired Col. David Titus (right) with the Georgia Sons of the American Revolution, presented Sgt. 1st Class Thomas Strayer with a certificate and medal for his help with the Kettle Creek observance, held each year near Washington, Ga.

Strayer, who also received a meritorious service medal at the short ceremony in the band’s rehearsal hall, said he enjoyed his time in the service.

“The people you meet is the thing I en-

joyed the most,” he said.

In his retirement, he plans to keep up with his music and plays for a band called Brass Tyme. He also plans to teach private music lessons.

Art festival highlights weekend events

Charmain Z. Brackett
Contributing writer

Focusing on the culture of the islands, the annual Arts in the Heart of Augusta Festival will be this weekend in downtown Augusta.

The event features more than 70 arts and crafts vendors plus four stages with entertainment and an ethnic food area.

There are also many activities for children to do.

The festival is from 5-9 p.m. today, 11 a.m.-9 p.m. Saturday and noon-7 p.m. Sunday at the Augusta Common

and other downtown spots.

Admission is \$5 at the gate with badges good for the entire weekend. Children 10 and under are admitted free.

For more information, call 826-4702.

FULL MOON HIKE

A full moon hike through the Pinizy Swamp Nature Park is scheduled for 9 p.m. Saturday.

Discover nocturnal animals such as owl, bats and beavers by the light of the silvery full moon on this two hour, two and a half mile hike with park staff.

The cost is free for park members and \$5 for non-members. For more in-

formation, call 828-2109.

SCIENCE SHOW

Journey into the Living Cell will be presented at the DuPont Planetarium today and Saturday at 7 and 8 p.m.

Fluorescent stained parts of the cell come to life on the dome of the planetarium on a virtual tour as each part of the cell and its function is explained.

Admission is \$4.50 adults, \$3.50 for seniors and \$2.50 students 4K-12. For more information, call: (803) 641-3769. The planetarium is located on the campus of the University of South Carolina Aiken.

Kennels *From page 1*

The new runs provide more space for the dogs, he added. In the smaller confines, the dogs experienced some health problems as they continually scraped their tails against the walls.

The facility also has office and multi-purpose space.

The new kennel also has a room where narcotic training aids and bomb training devices can be stored. The items are currently stored in the provost’s office.

Some of the dogs are trained to search for narcotics and some for explosives detection. Two of the dog and handler teams are currently deployed in Operation Enduring Freedom; other teams will soon replace them in the Middle East, said Adams, who added the unit was among the busiest at Fort Gordon.

There is room to expand the building as well, Anthony said.

After the tour, there was a demonstration by Sgt. Michael

Bombarger and Bino of what the dogs can do.

The two played out a series of scenarios with the help of Sgt. Matt Lewis, whose arm was covered with protective gear.

Lewis played several different roles from a cooperative but lost Soldier to a belligerent and uncooperative suspect who shot at Bombarger.

The dogs respond to commands; however, if their handler is threatened they do not need a command to defend their handler.

On hand for the exercise were deputies with the Richmond County Sheriff’s Department.

“We work side by side with Richmond County,” Anthony said. Deputies and military police often work together on cases, he said.

Fort Gordon also has a working relationship with the K-9 unit at the Savannah River Site.

Organizations welcome ‘newcomers’

Charmain Z. Brackett
Contributing writer

While Erin Hawkins hoped to sign up new blood donors at Kendrick Memorial Blood Center, Lisa Golden searched for potential volunteers at the National Science Center’s Fort Discovery, and Laurie Harmon wanted to get the word out about the programs and services of the Golden Harvest Food Bank.

The three were among 88 vendors at the Putting “U” in Augusta Newcomers Event Sept. 7 at the Gordon Club.

“I think it’s a wonderful opportunity for the military and civilian community to come together,” said Lori Borgna-Strong, who attended the event with her husband, Brig. Gen. Randolph P. Strong, Fort Gordon’s commanding general.

The annual event was the largest and best ever according to officials.

“We had to turn away about 30 vendors,” said Janna Crane with the Augusta Metro Chamber of Commerce, one of the event sponsors.

And attendance figures were equally impressive, said Pat Buchholz, Fort Gordon’s strategic management officer. About 450 people attended.

“Not only were we packed with vendors offering information on local busi-

nesses and things to see and do in Augusta, but the attendance was at an all-time high. Looking at the registration slips, there were Soldiers and family members from every unit on post. Every table was busy. It was incredible,” she said.



Photo by Tammy Moehliman

Wilbur the pig, from Famous Dave’s Bar-B-Que, entertains 2-year-old Joseph Kreiler at the Newcomers Event Sept. 7. The event was a way for residents to get familiar with what the area has to offer.

Among the vendors were banks, mortgage companies, insurance companies and real estate agents. There were many cultural organizations represented including the Greater Augusta Arts Council, Augusta Symphony and Morris Museum of Art.

“It’s very exciting,” said Beda Johnson with the Morris Museum of Art. “I think it’s a great opportunity to share information on what’s going on in Augusta. It’s one-stop shopping.”

Also, there were on-post organizations such as Fisher House, Army Community Service and the Fort Gordon Service Club represented, and several area colleges.

The event was just what Nivia Wilkinson was looking for.

“I want to learn what’s new here,” she said.

She arrived at Fort Gordon on Aug. 29. Although she had been at Fort Gordon before, a lot has changed – not only in the surrounding community but in her situation as well.

With two small children, Wilkinson said she was interested in finding out what types of activities were available for them.

“I’m looking for everything,” she said.

Papa John’s provided free pizza, and Coca Cola Bottling Co. provided free drinks. Throughout the event, there were drawings for door prizes.

Relief

From page 1

“We are providing backbone communications for military and civilian authorities,” Calvo said about the 93rd’s role. “The 67th (Signal Battalion) has done an outstanding job establishing communications for FEMA and other authorities to reach out and bring in help.”

“(Col. David Dodd), the commander of the 93rd, is on the ground directly involved with communications support for JTF-Katrina,” added Calvo.

The Soldiers with the 67th were deployed for a 17 day string, but may be required to stay longer.

“Some Soldiers will be coming back and others will stay longer,” explained Plummer. “As long as there is a command structure

there, we will probably have some of our Soldiers engaged and whatever day they decide to officially turn off JTF-Katrina under Lt. Gen. Honoré ...it will go down to a trickle as we pull back.”

“If we have people there in October, it wouldn’t surprise me,” added Plummer.

The experience of having a stateside mission has taught the Soldiers lessons that will not soon be forgotten.

“The Soldiers (learned) they can contribute, they are a player and that they can make a difference,” said Plummer. “We have something we can do right here in our country. You don’t have to deploy to make a difference. You can do good right here.”



Photo by Tammy Moehliman

Just in case

Linda Page, commissary cashier, rings up Dell Manigault’s purchases under a tent in the commissary parking lot Sept. 8 at the commissary’s Case Lot Sale. Customers braved the sun and hot temperatures, waiting in line to enter the tent. The sale was held Sept. 8 through Saturday.

Community Events

Indian celebration

The 2005 Ocmulgee Indian Celebration is **Saturday** and **Sunday** in Macon, Ga., featuring Aztec dancers from Mexico.

The celebration features arts, crafts, dancing, music, history, storytelling and food; admission is \$5 for ages 13 and older, \$2 with military ID. For information, call (478) 752-8257.

Greek festival

The 2005 Greek Festival is **Oct. 7** to **9** at 953 Telfair St. in Augusta; admission is free.

Activities include Greek music, dance troupe, food and crafts. For information, call 724-1087.

Bazaar

The Cliffwood Presbyterian Church is having a fall bazaar and bake sale at 8 a.m. **Oct. 1** at 2525 Lumpkin Rd. For information, call 791-5463.

Coin show

The CSRA coin club is having its fourth annual coin show from 9:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. **Sept. 24** at the Odell Weeks Activity Center in Aiken; admission is free. For information, call (803) 644-0761.

Hispanic month celebration

The 15th Regimental Signal Brigade's National Hispanic Heritage Month program is 11:30 a.m. **Oct. 5** at the Gordon Club. The guest speaker is Gail Rosario Fitzpatrick, youth minister, ACS volunteer and community leader. For information, call Staff Sgt. Terrell Tarver at 791-2424.

Volksmarch

The Office of the Staff Judge Advocate is holding a Volksmarch **Sept. 30** as part of the Oktoberfest celebration. Start the march from noon-2 p.m. at the Freedom Park Gazebo and follow a family-friendly route through Freedom Park trails, complete with water points. All participants receive a memento, and commemorative T-shirts will be for sale. Cost is \$5, children under three are free. Call 791-6109 or 791-1254 for information.

Service club meets

The Fort Gordon Service Club meets at 11:30 a.m. **Oct. 12** at the Family Outreach Center.

The group will be making holiday cards for deployed Soldiers and more. After the program, the group will go to Freedom Park Elementary School to make holiday

cards with their students of the month.

RSVP by Oct. 10 to Joanie Bryant at 863-2931.

College registration

Paine College is having registration for its Fall II session from **Sept. 20** to **22**; first day of classes is Oct. 12. For information, call 791-7979.

Job fair

The Greater North Augusta Chamber of Commerce is having a business expo and job fair from 3-7 p.m. **Thursday** at the North Augusta Community Center. For information, call (803) 279-2323.

AMU information

A representative from American Military University will be available from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. **Thursday** at the Education Center, Bldg. 21606, to discuss the educational needs of the military community.

For information, e-mail Buddy Maertens at fmaertens@apus.edu.

Job fair

The Army Career and Alumni Program and Army Community Service will host a job fair from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. **Oct. 4** at the Reserve Center. More than 60 local, state and national employers will be there. Job seekers should bring copies of their resume and dress for success. The event is open to the public. For more information call 791-2009 or 791-1053.

Festival

The Oliver Hardy Festival begins at 9 a.m. **Oct. 1** in Harlem, Ga.

Events include a children's parade, live entertainment, Laurel and Hardy look-alike contest, carnival rides, arts and crafts, a silent auction, food sales and more.

For information, call (706) 556-0401.

Job fair workshop

Army Career and Alumni Program is having a job fair preparation workshop at the ACAP Center from 10 a.m.-noon **Wednesday**. To register for one of the workshops, call 791-7333.

Retiree day

Retiree appreciation day is **Oct. 7**. Events include an information fair, seminars and a dinner with retired Lt. Gen. John Dubia, co-chair of the Chief of Staff of the Army's Retiree Council. Tickets for the dinner are \$18; for information call 791-2654.

Ultimate challenge

The Marine Corps Ultimate Challenge Run is 8 a.m. **Sept. 24** at the McCrady National Guard Training Center in Columbia, S.C.

Events include a team mud run, 5K family fun run and a 10K cross country challenge.

For information or to register go to www.usmcmudrun.active.com.

Oktoberfest

The Fort Gordon Oktoberfest is **Sept. 30** to **Oct. 1** at Barton Field. Activities include a carnival, food and drink sales, music and more.

Wreath laying

The 20th Field Artillery, 4th Infantry Division wreath laying ceremony is 10 a.m. **Sept. 23** at Freedom Park. For information call 791-9536.

Concert series

The Harry Jacobs Chamber Music Society concerts begin **Oct. 7** with a performance by The Brno Chamber Soloists with cellist Jan Skrdlik.

All concerts are at 8 p.m. at the Augusta State University Performing Arts Theatre; pre-concert begins at 7:15 p.m. The series runs through April 14.

Tickets available at the door; for membership information call 790-9274, or go to <http://>

www.hjcms.org/ for a complete concert listing.

The Sunshine Boys

The Fort Gordon Dinner Theatre presents Neil Simon's comedy The Sunshine Boys **today, Saturday** and **Sept. 23** and **24**; dinner begins at 7 p.m., the show at 8 p.m.

Tickets cost \$32 for DA civilians, seniors, retirees and E-7 and above; \$25 for E-6 and below; \$34 for all others; \$20 for show only. For information call 793-8552 or go to www.fortgordon.com.

Art exhibit

The Aiken County Historical Museum has the exhibit "Grand Illusions" on display through **Sept. 25**. The exhibit features examples of faux painting dating from the 1700s to the present. For information, call (803) 642-2015.

Support group

The Healthy Living with Diabetes Support Group meets at 5 p.m. the last **Thursday** of every month in the Eisenhower Army Medical Center conference room, inside the dining room on the third floor of the hospital. The group is open to the public.

For information call Maj. Victor Yu at 787-2143.

At the Movies

The Signal Theater is open Thursday-Sunday. Shows begin at 6:30 p.m. Children 12 and over and adults are \$3.50. Children 6-11 are \$1.75. Children under 5 are free. For movie listings and times, call 791-3982.

Sept. 16-22
Friday - Dukes of Hazzard (PG-13)
Saturday - The Great Raid (R)
Sunday -Dukes of Hazzard (PG-13)
Thursday - The Great Raid (R)

Note: Attendance at Fort Gordon's movie theater is strictly limited to authorized Post Exchange patrons.

Soldiers remember 9-11

Gary Sheftick
Army News Service

WASHINGTON – Soldiers from Afghanistan to the Pentagon remembered the fourth anniversary of the terrorist attacks Sept. 11, 2001, with memorial services and other events.

In Kabul, Afghanistan, service members gathered at Camp Eggers Sept. 11 for a ceremony that included taps and a moment of silence for those who died in the Pentagon and New York’s World Trade Center towers.

In Baghdad, about 200 service members, firefighters and civilians participated in a 5-kilometer “Remembrance Run” at Camp Victory.

In the Pentagon, a memorial service at noon Sept. 12 was preceded by 184 portraits flashed on a large screen one-by-one depicting those who lost their lives when a hijacked airliner hit the building four years ago.

TERRORISM DENOUNCED
Then Islamic Chaplain Navy Lt. SaifullIslam spoke to the congregation, which included survivors of the terrorist attack.

“There is no room for a heinous act such as 9-11 in any religion,” the chaplain said, “and not in Islam.”

“The Koran states: ‘live together and learn from each other, and not despise each other,’” SaifullIslam said.

“It is our duty to fight these acts of terrorism all over the world,” said SaifullIslam, a chaplain at Quantico Marine Corps Base, Va.

AMERICAN SPIRIT
Pentagon Chaplain Col. Ralph Benson provided a sermon about the enduring American spirit.

“We have come to remember the legacy of our fallen



Photo by Sgt. Benjamin Donde

Servicemembers stationed at Camp Eggers in Kabul, Afghanistan, render salutes while Taps is played during the Sept. 11 memorial ceremony.

American heroes,” Benson said at the beginning of the service. “Those who gave their lives in the service to our nation Sept. 11, 2001.”

Benson said he first visited the Pentagon just after the terrorist attacks and remembers that where his office is now located, there was nothing in 2001 but smoke and a pile of rubble.

But now a new 9-11 chapel has sprung up on the site, he said, for all to remember the legacy of that day.

“Even when things seem impossible, it’s the American spirit that wins,” Benson said.

“We are a people of hope...” Benson said. “When we see

tragedy, we remember it and move on...”

IT WAS A ‘NIGHTMARE’
Paul Brady next spoke about being an employee of the Navy Command Center who escaped when most of his co-workers died or were severely burned. Only eight of 34 who were in the Navy Command Center that morning survived, Brady said. He called that morning “the second infamous day in American history.”

When the plane hit, there was a “thunderous boom” in the command center, Brady said; the lights went out and he was knocked onto the floor by a concussion. Then the smoke and gas fumes began filling the room.

“It was total complete stinking blackness,” Brady said.

“I knew for a certainty that I’d be a dead man if I didn’t get out of there quick.”

Then all of a sudden, Brady said he saw a glimmer of light. He crawled toward it across the floor. Finally he came to a four-foot hole blasted through the wall. He was able to crawl through it and eventually made his way to the center courtyard and out the other side of the Pentagon.

It was a miracle, Brady said, adding that his hate and thirst for revenge for that day has now been replaced by prayer for everyone who perished – the victims and perpetrators alike.

Friendships are forever

Chap. (Lt. Col.)
Mickey Morton
Installation chaplain

It has been almost two years since I buried my best friend Dr. (Lt. Col.) Jon Baldwin in a small church in South Carolina. He left behind a wife and three young children. It was about the hardest thing I ever had to do, harder even than giving the eulogy at my dad’s funeral.

At my dad’s funeral, I was free to grieve. My wife and family members and I could hug and cry together. There were many friends and neighbors who provided words of condolence and brought food and much comfort.

At Jon’s funeral, I had to be in charge, strong; to help the family deal with their grief. I really should have been sitting with them, grieving with them, on the first

pray especially for those of you who feel the heavy burden of responsibility. I think of the many commanders who at this moment are fighting the Global War on Terrorism, making difficult decisions that can mean life or death for our military men and women. What a heavy burden of responsibility they have.

Also, I think of all those involved in the relief efforts of Hurricane Katrina which will soon change to recovering and identifying



thousands of dead bodies. It is gut wrenching.

How many friends do you have? Hundreds? Dozens? I am not talking about acquaintances. My hunch is that most of us don’t have more than five or six best friends. The ones with whom we can be our true selves.

We can let our “hair down” and not put on a façade. And if best friend means being able to discuss a shameful act that we have done, and kept hidden, we are blessed if we have more than one.

King Solomon in the Book of Proverbs says, “Ointment and perfume delight the heart, and the sweetness of a friend does so by hearty counsel.” (Proverbs 27:9) Be sure to tend to your friendships today.

So today I remember and



Photo by Diane Brady

Pfc. Andrew Arnett, 2nd Brigade, 1/64 AR Bn., was one of the 42 Soldiers at the barbecue Wednesday at the Veterans Affairs Hospital on Wrightsboro Road. Arnett was injured in Baghdad July 13.

Soldiers receive compassion, thanks for service

Diane Brady
Special to the Signal

Members of Aldersgate United Methodist Church in Augusta Wednesday served up a barbecue lunch, and fellowship, to 42 active duty Soldiers recovering from injuries at the Wrightsboro Road Veterans Administration Hospital.

“I enjoyed (the barbecue),” said Staff Sgt. Jason Smith, of Fort Stewart’s 3rd Infantry Division, 3/69th AR. Smith was injured in Samarra, Iraq, March 28 when an IED in the road exploded near his Humvee. “It’s good to get out and get down-home cooking, even if it is only hamburgers and hotdogs. This is the second barbecue that I’ve at-

tended that this church has put on for the Soldiers.”

“It’s nice to have this. It’s good to have something other than hospital food,” added Staff Sgt. Carl Holtzman, Co. A, 1/110 Inf., who was injured in Iraq Aug. 1.

In addition to the food and fellowship, local artist and Aldersgate member Jennifer Louthan presented each wounded Soldier with a limited edition print she created signifying freedom and America. When asked why she donated the prints, with a lump in her throat Louthan said “I wanted to personally thank these Soldiers for their service and for the sacrifices they’ve made in fighting for our country.”

Animals lost in the aftermath

Master Sgt. Orville F. Desjarlais Jr.
Air Force Print News

NEW ORLEANS INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, La. – When David Cook’s resolve crumbled after a week of surviving in his third-floor apartment amid Hurricane Katrina floodwaters, he searched for help that arrived too quickly.

After Cook endured Katrina’s wrath Aug. 29, he said his two “hardheaded” roommates talked him into staying put another seven days despite the damage to their room.

“The smell started to get to me,” Cook said about the seven feet of floodwater that filled up the first floor of his complex.

Fortunately he had access to a boat, so he loaded up himself and his two dogs, Maya and Tiny, and paddled across the road to another complex. After lifting his dogs out of the boat, he took them to the roof and awaited evacuation.

When the helicopter arrived, it swooped in swiftly, so quickly that Cook did not have time to catch Tiny, who shied away from the thump and whipping winds of the helicopter blades.

On Sept. 5, with only Maya in his arms, he walked off the helicopter and into this airport and asked, “What do I do?”

That question has been asked about 20,000 times since the start of this rescue effort. That is how many displaced people have been processed through here. And with the people came the pets.

When rescuers first began plucking people from rooftops after the hurricane passed, they ran across something quite unexpected. Since the rescuers focused on saving as many human lives as possible, some refused to save pets. Not enough room in the helicopters. Much to their surprise, some pet owners refused to evacuate if forced to leave their pets behind.

Days later, when the numbers of evacuees ebbed, helicopter aircrews began rescuing more pets. Once the pets arrived here, veterinarian medical assistant team members from the Federal Emer-

gency Management Agency treated and released the animals. Recently, FEMA moved them elsewhere in this vast, three-state disaster area.



Photo by Air Force Master Sgt. Jack Braden

Staff Sgt. Kevin Sanada examines Pork Chop after being evacuated Sept. 6. Pork Chop was airlifted to the New Orleans airport with his owner before being evacuated.

Engineers fix levee breaches

Army News Service

WASHINGTON – The fourth of four critical breaches in the 17th Street Canal and London Avenue Canal system was closed Sept. 10 and Army Corps of Engineers officials have shortened their estimate on how long it will take to pump floodwaters out of New Orleans.

More than 1,600 Army Corps of Engineers employees are now engaged in Hurricane Katrina recovery efforts, officials said. With more than \$2.9 billion in missions, the Corps is working with its government and contracting partners to meet the most urgent needs in Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama, officials said. They said this includes providing ice and water, temporary roofing, temporary housing, power assessment, and debris removal.

BREACH REPAIR, THEN PUMPING

Working with the city of New Orleans and private con-

tractors, the Army Corps of Engineers continues to make steady progress on pumping out floodwaters from the city of New Orleans and immediate vicinity.

Through a system of existing and temporary pumps, floodwaters are being pumped into Lake Ponchartrain. The number of pumps that are operational at any given time is continually changing. As an average, this system is pumping water at about one million gallons per day, which is equivalent to approximately 432 Olympic-size swimming pools per day.

Original estimates for completing the un-watering of the city have recently been revised, officials said. They cited several factors, such as no significant rainfall, strong easterly winds that have allowed the Lake Ponchartrain levels to recede lower than expected, the deliberate un-watering breaches or ‘notches’ that have allowed flooded areas to drain

faster and thus have improved the ability to acquire more pump capacity.

Corps officials now estimate the overall un-watering effort will be completed in early to mid-October.

The estimates are based on normal seasonal rainfall, officials said.

The un-watering effort will remove most, but not all the water, Corps officials said. There will be some isolated pockets of water that will remain. However, they added that these pockets should not hamper recovery efforts such as debris removal, structural assessments and restoration of critical services.

WATER AND ICE

In Mississippi, more than 18,000 tons of ice and 8 million liters of water have been delivered to staging areas. In Louisiana, more than 15,000 tons of ice and 15 million liters of water have been delivered. In Alabama, more than 6,000 tons of ice and five million li-

ters of drinking water has been delivered.

DEBRIS REMOVAL

More than 270,000 cubic yards of debris has been removed thus far from areas affected by Hurricane Katrina, officials said, adding that these numbers continue to increase daily.

POWER ASSESSMENTS

In Mississippi, almost 200 power assessments have been completed, and 35 sites have power restored. Power assessment teams continue to work in New Orleans with 223 of 256 assessments completed.

OTHER MISSIONS

In support of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the Corps of Engineers will be assessing and repairing public facilities (schools, libraries, fire stations, etc.) for the state of Louisiana. This mission is estimated at \$200 million dollars, officials said.

(Information provided by an Army Corps of Engineers news release.)



Photo by Air Force Master Sgt. Scott Reed

Sgt. Eduardo Villarreal, 149th Aviation Support Battalion, Texas Army National Guard, guides the pilot of a UH-60 into position to drop a sling-load of rock and sand at the break in the 17th Street Canal.

Fort Gordon exchange honors retirees today

The Fort Gordon Post Exchange will formally honor military retirees during its annual “Still Serving” weekend, today through Sunday.

Throughout the “Still Serving” weekend, the Fort Gordon exchange will create excitement through special events such as drawings, free refreshments, free product samples, vendor demonstrations and door prizes.

Representing nearly half of Army & Air Force Exchange Services military households, the exchange maintains a strong relationship with retirees throughout the entire year.

“Military retirees make up 42 percent of sponsors eligible to shop AAFES facilities,” said Kenneth Brewington, exchange general man-

ager. “While we pause to formally recognize them in September of each year, AAFES and its associates understand that retirees deserve our gratitude 365 days a year.”

When retirees shop at the Fort Gordon exchange, they provide needed support for Directorate of Morale, Welfare and Recreation programs, facilities and non-appropriated fund construction projects such as bowling, swimming, golfing and horse back riding.

“Retiree support plays a big part in AAFES’ annual dividend. Without their support it would not have been possible for AAFES to return more than \$242 million to Armed Forces MWR programs last year,” said Brewington.

(From an AAFES news release.)

Instructors

From page 2

January will also be recognized at the installation’s yearly awards ceremony in December.

The 15th Signal Brigade handles about 12,000 Soldiers a year and with about 3,000 to 5,000 students on any given day.

“I tell people we are about twice the size of Clemson’s freshman class and we’re about the same size as the University of Georgia’s freshman class, with very close to the same demographics, except our folks have money in their pockets,” jokes Sussman, as she reflects on the number of students in her classrooms.

As a colonel in the Army, Sussman realizes the qualities that make a great instructor and the effort they put into preparing Soldiers for the tasks they face in the future.

“The instructors play such an important role in the future of our regiment, they are the people who spend the most time, believe it or not, other

than the drill sergeant, with our Soldiers,” she said. “The big difference between basic training and (Advanced Individual Training) is the fact that they’re getting instructed on their core competency in their signal or ordnance skill.

“So, the instructors are that centerpiece to bringing a basically trained Soldier through the process and making them either a signal or ordnance warrior here at Fort Gordon,” said Sussman. “These kids will only be as good as their instructors.”

The 15th Signal Brigade is working to redesign its teaching methods to fit the learning style of the current generation. The students they get now are “technical logically savvy,” according to Sussman. “We’re trying to capitalize on that and not bore them.”

Sussman feels that the instructors should live the Army values and be a great role model. They should also have patience and a sense of humor

when it comes to working with the young troops, which is why many felt that the instructors should be recognized with a ball in their honor.

“I think it is a great idea. I think all the instructors do a really good job and they deserve to be honored,” said Pfc. Ashley Heath, 447th Signal Battalion. Heath performed the national anthem at the ball.

“Sgt. Maj. Russell played a vital role in bringing the event together. He has been the spear head. He spends every minute thinking of ways of giving back to the Army and Soldiers... and I think this is his last gift to the Signal Center...making sure that these instructors, who work so hard, get their recognition because the future of the regiment is really in their hands,” Sussman said about Russell, who is getting ready to retire.

“He really is the heartbeat of this very first instructor of the year recognition ball.”

Sports & Leisure

Sports UPDATE

Ultimate challenge

The Marine Corps Ultimate Challenge Run is 8 a.m. **Sept. 24** at the McCrady National Guard Training Center in Columbia, S.C.

Events include a team mud run, 5K family fun run and a 10K cross country challenge.

For information or to register go to www.usmc.mudrun.active.com.

Exercise workshops

The Health and Wellness Center and the National Exercise Trainers Association are co-sponsoring the following nationally-recognized workshops:

Group Exercise Certification, 8 a.m. **Oct. 15.**

Active Older Adults Workshop 8 a.m., **Oct. 16.**

Workshops are held at the HAWC, Building 29605.

For information call Melody Brown at 787-7459; to register call (800) 237-6242 or go to www.netafit.org.

Paintball course

The Paintball course behind The Courtyard is open 3 p.m. Friday, 10 a.m. Saturday and 1 p.m. Sunday, each day until dark.

Group rates available; call 228-5540 for information.

EFMP bowling

Exceptional Family Member Program Bowling is held the third Monday of each month at 5 p.m.

EFMP Bowling is free for special needs family members who are enrolled in EFMP, and is held at Gordon Lanes.

Free shoe rental and door prizes available; cost is \$1.25 per game.

For information call Amos Demps at 791-3579.

Golf course

Gordon Lakes Golf Course is open daily, 6:30 a.m.-7 p.m., offering 27 holes of play and a driving range.

Memberships are available to the public.

For information call 791-2433.

Kid's fishing derby

Fort Gordon Outdoor Recreation is having a Kid's Fishing Derby **Sept. 24.**

Registration begins at 7:30 a.m. at the Claypit Lakes. Fishing begins at 8:00 a.m.

Free T-shirts for the first 300 kids. Free hot dogs and sodas will be available to each participant.

Kids need to bring their own fishing pole.

For information call Outdoor Recreation at 791-5078.

Ladies' clinics

Gordon Lakes Golf Course is offering Ladies' golf clinics **Sept. 26, 27, 28 and 29.**

The clinics will be held from 6 p.m.-7 p.m.

Cost is \$10 per session.

For information call the Pro Shop at 791-2433.

Army motorcyclist races to win

Maj. William Thurmond
Army News Service

ARLINGTON, Va. — People will do almost anything to experience peace and contentment, especially in times of trouble. Much of the pharmaceutical industry and the majority of late-night TV infomercials are devoted to the pursuit of bliss.

But one young lady, Army drag racing motorcyclist Angelle Sampey, has found her answer in a most unusual therapeutic environment.

Sampey climbs on her highly customized Suzuki GSXR 1100, tuned to 1,500 CCs, and goes for a little ride. At 190 mph.

"Racing is the best stress reliever. I use it to relax. It's like my drug," says Sampey.

"People drink or take drugs, and we wish that they wouldn't, in an effort to find calm. I've found mine in racing."

This past weekend's Mac Tools NHRA competition in Indianapolis was perhaps the ultimate test for Sampey's ability to employ speed as a stress buster.

The three-time Pro Stock champion is also a New Orleans resident and Louisiana native. She has quite an extended family that was impacted by hurricane Katrina's destructive march across her home state.

Sampey arrived at Indy soon after Katrina made landfall, and for much of the first few days she divided her time between getting ready to race and trying to determine the whereabouts of many of her family members.

"I'm very concerned about what happened to my city. I heard that they got most everyone out. But I still don't know about all my family. All the phones are out. Yes, I'm worried."

These distractions might have mentally crippled other

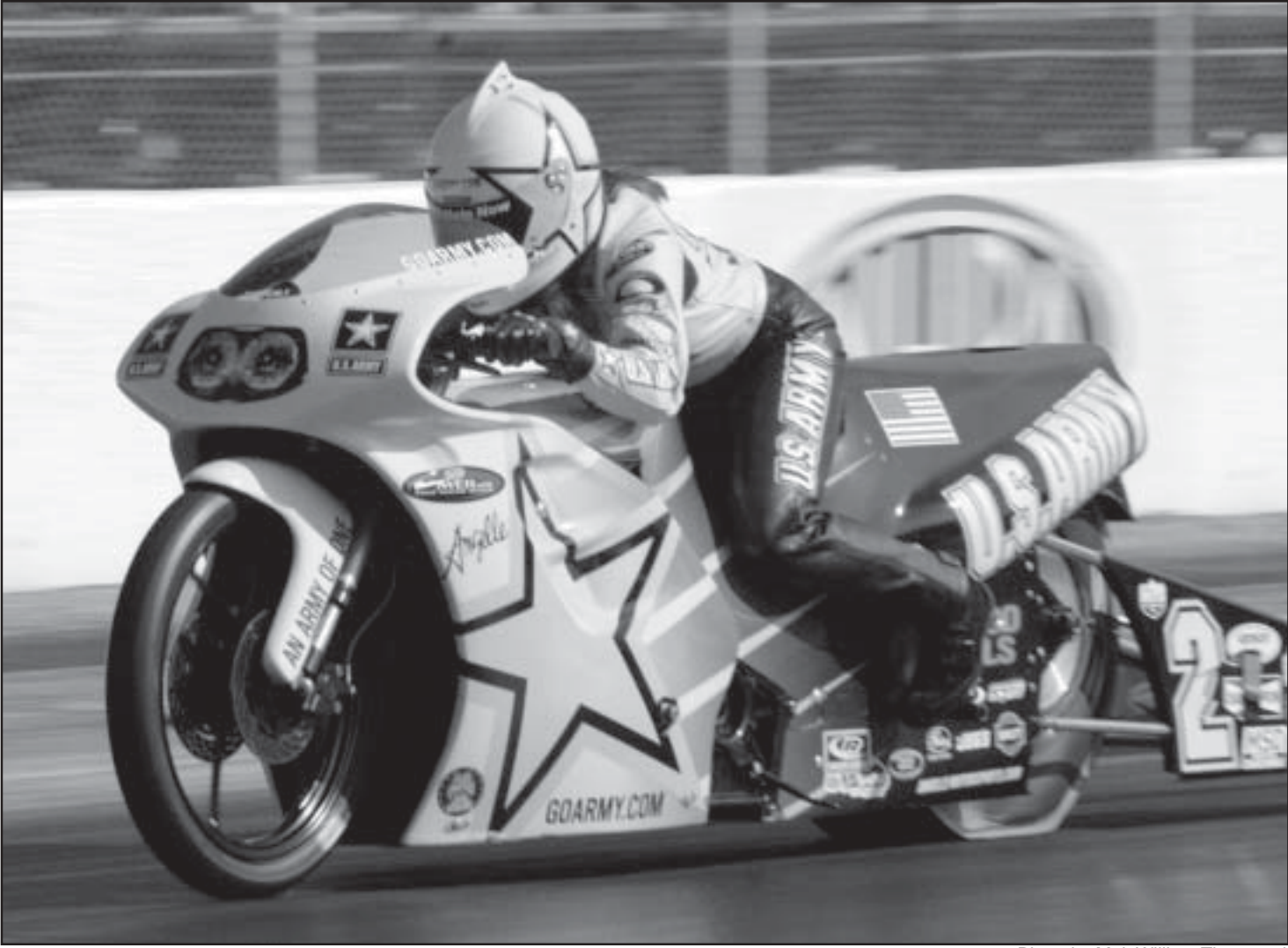


Photo by Maj. William Thurmond

Angelle Sampey blasts past the capacity crowd at Indianapolis Raceway Park during the Mac Tools U.S. Nationals competition Monday.

less experienced riders.

Not Sampey, the winningest female racer in NHRA history. Somehow she was able to put her concerns aside and do what she does best — ride a motorcycle incredibly fast.

"I actually find I do better racing when I have stuff going on in my personal life," said Sampey. I think that's because I can use racing as an outlet to get away from problems. For some reason it helps me to focus more. I've learned how to do that over the past 10 years of racing.

"When we get up to the staging lane and when I crank up my bike, everything that's going on in my life just starts to fade as I start to focus on

my run."

The evidence of mental and emotional strength was on full display, as Sampey defeated several competitors and earned a top-flight qualifying berth for Monday's heats.

Thankfully, communications with her family were restored just prior to the start of Monday's final eliminations.

"I spoke with a cousin back in Louisiana and it looks like all my family evacuated and are safe," said Sampey. "There's a couple of folks I haven't heard from but I'm sure they got out. They're scattered around Louisiana so now we'll try to get everyone back together again."

That burden lifted, Sampey got down to business.

Posting a perfect reaction time in her first-round victory, and edging-out her rival in the quarter final, Sampey was finally defeated by fellow Suzuki rider Steve Johnson, who just beat her to the line by .085 seconds.

"We had an engine problem. We actually scuffed a piston, and we can't win with that going on, not with the competition that's out here," said Sampey.

But it will take more than mechanical problems, or hurricanes, to stop this team.

"This Army team definitely does not quit, ever. When we had a problem with our gas tank on Friday, the crew engineered a solution and got the bike fixed and to the starting line about 10

minutes before I raced. It doesn't matter what the problem is, these guys will get the job done."

The race weekend behind her, Sampey made plans to return to Louisiana and pitch in on the recovery efforts there.

"I'm a registered nurse, and although I don't have a current license, I have the knowledge. I want to go home and volunteer at a hospital. I have some time before my next race, so I can devote a week or so."

Sampey's attitude echoed her sponsor's "never quit" ethos.

"We're Cajun people. We're strong. We've been through a lot and we'll be all right."

Army wife, NASCAR writer soldiers on

Maj. William Thurmond
Army News Service

RICHMOND, Va. — As the popularity of NASCAR continues to explode, one Army wife and fan has decided to share her racing passion with the world.

Carolyn Brewster has been a regular columnist for NASCAR Scene magazine for the past three years, writing her column "Confessions of a NASCAR Fan" for over 130 thousand weekly readers.

"My husband (Army Maj. Wayne Brewster) and I were subscribers and I thought I could contribute something fun and lighthearted," said Brewster.

"A lot of people can relate to what I have to say because I'm not an insider. I write from the fan's perspective."

"I think part of my column's appeal is the fact that I'm a military wife and so many military folks are also NASCAR fans. I think it also helps that I'm a woman, partly due to the fact that NASCAR is the fastest growing sport among women," said Brewster.

Brewster has followed stock car racing for the past five years.

Her favorite drivers are the Army's "Front Row" Joe Nemechek and Dale Jarrett.

Currently assigned to Fort Wainwright, Alaska, Brewster flew across

three time zones to catch the final race to the chase.

Unfortunately her husband, the operations officer for 2-1 Infantry Battalion of the 172nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team (SBCT), was unable to make the trip with her to this race.

He's with his unit in Northern Iraq. He's been gone over a month.

"I worry about his safety, but I know he's well trained," says Brewster.

Despite the distance, the Brewsters keep in touch with the help of the internet.

"We communicated almost daily via email when he was in Kuwait. But he's been really busy since he arrived in Iraq, so he's only been able to send a couple of notes."

Brewster intends to absorb as much as possible of the weekend's Richmond International Raceway atmosphere so she can share it with her Soldier.

"I'm going to send him lots of pictures and write to him about the whole race experience."

Brewster says that her husband expects to be able to watch the Saturday night race on the Armed Forces Network in Iraq.

With redeployment set to occur in about a year, you can imagine that NASCAR figures into their reunion plans.

"We want to go to a race in Las Ve-



Cameras In Action

Carolyn Brewster (right) and Jennifer Sawyer, both of whose husbands are in the 2-1 Infantry Battalion of the 172nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, pose with Joe Nemechek on pit road prior to the start of Saturday night's NASCAR Nextel Cup race.

gas, and maybe another night race in Bristol."

As to the immediate future, Brewster intends to continue her writing about racing, especially now.

Standing in the Richmond garage area, surrounded by hundreds of driv-

ers, mechanics and NASCAR officials, Brewster sees similarities between the Army and her favorite sport.

"Both the Army and NASCAR value and reward teamwork and perseverance. In both worlds people only succeed when they work together.



Photo by James Hudgins

Chamber salutes military

Ron Cross, chairman of the Columbia County Board of Commissioners, welcomes attendees to the Sept. 3 Augusta GreenJackets' baseball game. The Columbia County Chamber of Commerce hosted Military Appreciation Day at Lake Olmstead Stadium. Major sponsors included the Augusta Chapter of the Association of the United States Army and the C.S.R.A. Alliance, which provided tickets and refreshments to more than 1,000 military personnel and family members. The sponsors were identified incorrectly in last week's edition of *The Signal*.

Munitions clearing program makes Iraq safer

Samantha L. Quigley

American Forces Press Service

HUNTSVILLE, Ala. – Iraq is safer, thanks to the efforts of a team that has destroyed hundreds of thousands of tons of captured enemy ammunition.

In June 2003, military officials in Iraq called on the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Engineering and Support Center here, the core of expertise for ordnance and explosives, to handle an estimated 600,000 tons of captured enemy ammunition.

ESC was contacted for two reasons, officials said: coalition military

leaders had determined that the amount of munitions was more than the military was prepared to handle, and securing a stockpile that large would divert military assets from the main mission of fighting the insurgency.

An ESC assessment team was sent to Iraq, and it submitted a proposal in July 2003, detailing what ESC could do and how the unit would do it, Stahl said. By Aug. 8 of the same year, contracts had been awarded. By Sept. 11, the first demolition was conducted, said Mike Stahl, program manager for ESC's Coalition Munitions Clearance Program.

"Everybody tells me that no, that was not an arbitrary date; that was a goal," he said.

Six self-sustaining depot sites were established to secure and demolish the munitions that were already in coalition forces' possession, Stahl said. The goal of beginning demolition from these sites by Dec. 1, 2003, was met, and to date about 406,000 tons of munitions have been destroyed through ESC and military disposal operations.

"No, 200,000 tons didn't go missing," he explained. Rather, the initial estimate of 600,000 tons proved to be too high. "I am convinced that there was never 600,000 tons there – that the 400,000 tons is much, much closer, much more accurate," he said. Stahl said that Arlington near Bayji, the biggest depot, housed 50,000 tons.

Just as important as destroying the large caches at the depot sites, was "collapsing" the smaller sites, or consolidating their munitions at the depots, to keep the munitions from insurgents, Stahl said. The goal, he added, was to collapse all the sites by Sept. 30, 2004.

"If we could get everything outside...collapsed into the six depots, then we had control of it," he said. The team provided its own security at the depots, and collapsing the smaller sites meant soldiers would no longer be needed to guard those locations. "We were securing the depots so it didn't require military personnel and they were freed up to the job that they really needed to do," Stahl said.

Transporting these caches to the depots left the teams vulnerable to insurgents on the roads, so, when possible, they destroyed the munitions in place.

The team's mission, however, does not account for unexploded ordnance, known as "UXO," that was deemed unsafe to move, Stahl said. "There were a lot of those sites left," he said. "There still ... is an extensive UXO mission." That mission belongs to the military explosive ordnance disposal teams in country. ESC, however, has six 25-person mobile teams to clean up UXO sites assigned to them by the military. These teams will continue their mission for the foreseeable future, Stahl said.

The team met its goal of collapsing the smaller caches collapsed by Sept.



U.S. Army photo

Smoke from the detonation of a captured enemy munitions stockpile fills the air at a depot site in Iraq. In August 2003, six depot sites housed hundreds of thousands of tons of captured enemy ammunition. To date, a U.S. Army Engineering and Support Center team from Huntsville, Ala., has been able to close three of those sites.



U.S. Army photo

Members of a team from the Huntsville, Ala., U.S. Army Engineering and Support Center prepare to detonate captured enemy ammunition at one of six depot sites in Iraq.

30, and has destroyed all of the munitions in three of the six depots. That took about two years, Stahl said, allowing those three depots to be shut down.

The CMC program also is on schedule to close another depot soon, Stahl said. While the remaining two depots, Arlington and Buckmaster, near Tikrit, will remain open as legacy depots, disposal operations are expected to wrap up in the first quarter of fiscal 2006. The ESC will manage operations at those depots for at least a year, Stahl said.

ESC began the job with four primary missions, two of which have been completed: replacing active duty military and beginning the destruction of captured enemy ammunition, Stahl said. The other two missions – management of the CEA from "cradle-to-grave" and hiring and training local Iraqis in the safe handling and disposal of such munitions – are ongoing, he added.

Also ongoing is the focus on safety.

Between the 600 government and contract workers and the 800 local Iraqis working on the project, the combined rate of accidents that resulted in lost time is about .23 per 200,000 hours worked, Stahl said. Though that is far below the Army's standard of 2 per 200,000 hours worked, he added, there has been an on-site fatality. A contractor was killed in an explosive accident on site during the Fourth of July weekend.

The team has lost nine Americans to hostile actions, as well, Stahl said. Those killed were part of a three-bus convoy that was attacked by insurgents on its way to the Buckmaster site in December, Stahl said. Several Iraqi workers also were killed in that attack.

Though 38,000 tons of munitions still are stored at depots, only 24,000 tons will be destroyed, Stahl said. The remainder will be retained for the new Iraqi army, he explained.

‘Operation Restoring Rights’ to secure Tal Afar

Army News Service

BAGHDAD, Iraq – At least 119 suspected terrorists have been detained since Sept. 10 by Iraqi security forces and Coalition troops in northern Iraq as they continue operations to purge insurgents from the city of Tal Afar, about 30 miles west of Mosul.

In a cordon and search Sept. 10, Coalition forces detained 41 individuals suspected of terrorist activity, officials said.

Security forces also seized a mortar system with multiple rounds of ammunition and a cache consisting of hundreds of rounds of ammunition.

"Operation Restoring Rights is being conducted to remove terrorists and foreign fighters operating in Tal Afar,"

said Col. Billy J. Buckner, spokesman for Multi-National Corps-Iraq.

"This operation is in support of the Iraqi government's efforts to bring safety and security to the citizens of the city," Buckner said.

"The local government requested Coalition assistance in setting the conditions needed to establish permanent Iraqi security for the people of Tal Afar that will allow them to vote in upcoming elections," added Buckner.

Task Force Freedom detained 78 more suspected terrorists during operations in Tal Afar Sept. 12 as Operation Restoring Rights continued.

Soldiers from 2nd Squadron, 3rd Armored Cavalry

Regiment detained 57 individuals suspected of terrorist activity during two operations.

Soldiers from 1st Squadron, 3rd ACR detained 15 terror suspects during a cordon and search operation.

Soldiers from 2nd Battalion, 325th Airborne Infantry Regiment detained four suspected terrorists.

Soldiers from 3rd ACR also detained two individuals suspected of terrorist activity while patrolling.

The suspects are in custody with no Multi-National Force injuries reported.

Since Aug. 26, Iraqi and Coalition Forces have captured 211 terror suspects, killed 141 terrorists and confiscated nine weapons caches, MNC-I reported.



Photographer's Mate 1st Class Alan D. Monyelle

A Soldier of the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment provides security Sept. 6 at a checkpoint in Tal Afar, Iraq.

MTV host skydives with Golden Knights team

Beth E. Musselman

Army News Service

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Army Parachute Team, the Golden Knights, conducted a tandem skydive for MTV on Sept. 2 near Fort Bragg, N.C.

The MTV crew was filming an upcoming segment for their Total Request Live, featuring video jockey Vanessa Minillo parachuting with the Golden Knights.

TRL is one of MTV's most popular programs. It's an entertainment show featuring interviews, live performances, MTV news updates, and a video countdown. It broadcasts daily to an average of 3 million young viewers.

Minillo is one of six video jockeys who co-host the show TRL.

As Army ambassadors, the Golden Knights' mission includes performing aerial demonstrations to the public and promoting the Army and its recruitment effort, competing in national and international parachuting competitions and testing and evaluating new parachuting equipment and techniques for improved operations and safety.

The team demonstrates the unique

opportunities provided by the Army.

"The Golden Knights enable the Army to connect to the American public and provide them a taste of the professionalism, leadership and teamwork that is at the core of today's Army," said Lt. Col. David Standridge, Golden Knights commander.

"I hope this piece will give young viewers a positive impression of the Army," said Standridge.

Prior to her tandem jump, Minillo attended a one-hour training session. Minillo suited up and joined the tandem team on the Golden Knights, DeHavilland UV-18 Twin Otter plane.

The MTV crew joined her on board and filmed the entire experience. Minillo performed her tandem jump from more than 12,500 feet in the air with Golden Knights tandem master Sgt. 1st Class Billy Van Soelen.

"The uniqueness of the Army's Golden Knights is unbelievable. I have performed tandem jumps in the past but this was different. The professionalism and expertise of everyone involved gives me a new-found respect for the Army," said Minillo.

The jump aired on MTV's Total Request Live Tuesday.



U.S. Army Golden Knights photo

TRL host Vanessa Minillo and Golden Knight Sgt. 1st Class Billy Van Soelen perform a tandem jump for Total Request Live near Fort Bragg, N.C.

Thousands walk to support freedom’s defenders

Col. Randy Pullen
Army News Service

WASHINGTON – U.S. Army Reserve Master Sgt. Valerie Golowaty was among the thousands who took part in the first “America Supports You Freedom Walk” Sunday.

If she and Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld have their way, it’ll be the inaugural one of many Freedom Walks to come.

Standing on the stage set up on the JFK Hockey Field next to the World War II Memorial, where the walk finished and from which country music star Clint Black performed a 90-minute concert for the walkers, Rumsfeld addressed the throng who sat on the grass before him.

“This was the first march for freedom,” Rumsfeld said, “Looking at the size of this

crowd, I suspect it won’t be the last one.”

“I’m glad to hear that these walks will continue,” Golowaty said after she managed to get a photo taken with the Defense secretary. “I’ll walk again.”

Golowaty, a member of the Army Reserve’s 3409th Military Intelligence Detachment from Gaithersburg, Md., was called to active duty in April 2003 and is now working at the Defense Intelligence Agency, said she participated in the Freedom Walk for a couple of reasons.

“Nothing touched me like what happened on 9-11,” said native New Yorker Golowaty. “I really felt the pain that day.”

“I’m also doing this for my fellow Soldiers,” she said, “especially for the ones overseas. They’re in harm’s way now. My heart also goes out to their

families.”

On a day full of memories, the secretary of Defense had memories of his own. In his remarks, Rumsfeld – who had walked in today’s march – said that the last time he walked across Memorial Bridge was as a congressman in November 1963, going to Arlington National Cemetery in President John F. Kennedy’s funeral procession.

“Walking the other way today, I couldn’t help thinking of that,” he said. He went on to express his appreciation for those who took part in the day’s walk.

“Thank you for your wonderful support of all our men and women serving nobly everywhere,” Rumsfeld said. “Thank you for your support of freedom.”

More than 15,000 people registered online to take part in the walk. The approximately two-mile route started at the Pentagon, went to Arlington National Cemetery, made a sharp turn across Memorial

Bridge, went around the Lincoln Memorial and ended beside the Reflecting Pool.

Like the day four years ago, Sunday in Washington was beautiful, with temperatures in the low 80s and a clear blue sky overhead.

The marchers included members of all of the Armed Forces and family members, civilian employees of the military and people with no ties to the military, small children and senior citizens with canes. There were those who had been in the Pentagon four years ago and others who had lost loved ones there. Many were veterans of combat in Iraq and Afghanistan. Some of those were in wheelchairs or walked on artificial limbs.

The intent of the Freedom Walk was to remember the victims of the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks on America, to support American men and women in uniform, past and present, and to commemorate freedom.

From the comments by the

walkers, these goals were met, including some up-close examples of exercising the freedom guaranteed by the first amendment to the Constitution – the right to peacefully protest.

There were demonstrators along parts of the parade route. Most walkers ignored them or read their signs without com-

ment. Some did their own impromptu, verbal counter-protests back at the protesters.

One Soldier gave his son an impromptu civics lessons as they passed by one small protest group.

“Do you know why they can protest like that? Because of people like us who fight for their rights.”



Photo by Col. Randy Pullen

Freedom Walkers start across Memorial Bridge with the Women in Military Service for America Memorial and Lee House at Arlington National Cemetery in the background.

‘Freedom’ walkers mark 9-11

Steven Donald Smith
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON – Sunday marked the fourth anniversary of the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the United States, and to commemorate that tragic event the Defense Department held the first “America Supports You Freedom Walk.”

“This is a day for us to remember all those loved ones that were lost, and everyone who suffered so much that day,” Gordon England, acting deputy secretary of defense, said prior to the walk.

“It is a day to remember the first responders and all those who came to the rescue,” England said, “and a day to remember all those who wear the cloth of our nation around the world, who protect and defend the freedoms and liberties that we so cherish.”

The walk participants began assembling in the Pentagon parking lot at 8 a.m.

Bill O’Donnell was one of the first to arrive with his wife, Darlene, and daughter, Amber.

“I work in the Pentagon, and I was here on 9/11. And I thought this would be a good way to both commemorate the event and support our troops,” O’Donnell said. “I think it’s very important that everybody needs to remember exactly what happened that day and the sacrifices our military make to maintain our freedom and liberty.”

At 9:37 a.m. there was a moment of silence to commemorate the exact instant the terrorists drove American Airlines Flight 77 into the Pentagon, killing 184 people.

Dwight Richard said he was walking to show his support for American servicemembers.

“We need to support the troops, regardless of our political affiliation,” Richard said. “It is wrong what happened to the troops who came home from Vietnam.”

Added Lou Valencia: “The troops put their lives on the line for us, so they deserve our support,” he said.

Plans are already underway for next year’s walk, with the goal of starting an annual tradition to commemorate 9/11 by having each state hold its own “America Supports You Freedom Walk.”

Spectrum



Photos by Kristy Davies

Bull rider John Welsh, of Wadley, Ala., attempts a full eight-second ride at the Fort Gordon rodeo.

Rodeo at the Fort

Kristy Davies
Signal staff

Horses, calves, steer and bulls were the featured performers at the Fort Gordon Rodeo Sept. 9 to 10. Approximately 2,000 people came to the annual event, which was held on Barton Field. Featured at the rodeo were bareback and saddle bronc riding, bull riding, steer wrestling, calf and team roping, breakaway roping and barrel racing.

“(The reason for holding the rodeo) is to bring a diverse event for the (servicemembers) and their families,” said Kim Lyons, Fort Gordon Directorate of Morale, Welfare and Recreation commercial sponsorship and advertising coordinator. “We try to have a variety of events to satisfy everybody.”

During the rodeo were special events including a demonstration by the Lone Indian

Chief, kids’ calf scramble, Watermelon Crawl and Money the Hard Way.

During Money the Hard Way approximately 10 audience members volunteer to join a full grown, angry bull in the arena. Then they try to remove a ribbon tied around the bull’s neck to win money. Several of the volunteers were Fort Gordon Soldiers.

“Yes (it hurt),” said 1st Lt. Kalin Reardon, Company C, 73rd Ordnance Battalion as he smiled.

Participants in the rodeo came from all over the United States.

“I get to travel, have fun and meet new people,” said Holly Johnson, a breakaway roper from Cartersville, Ga.

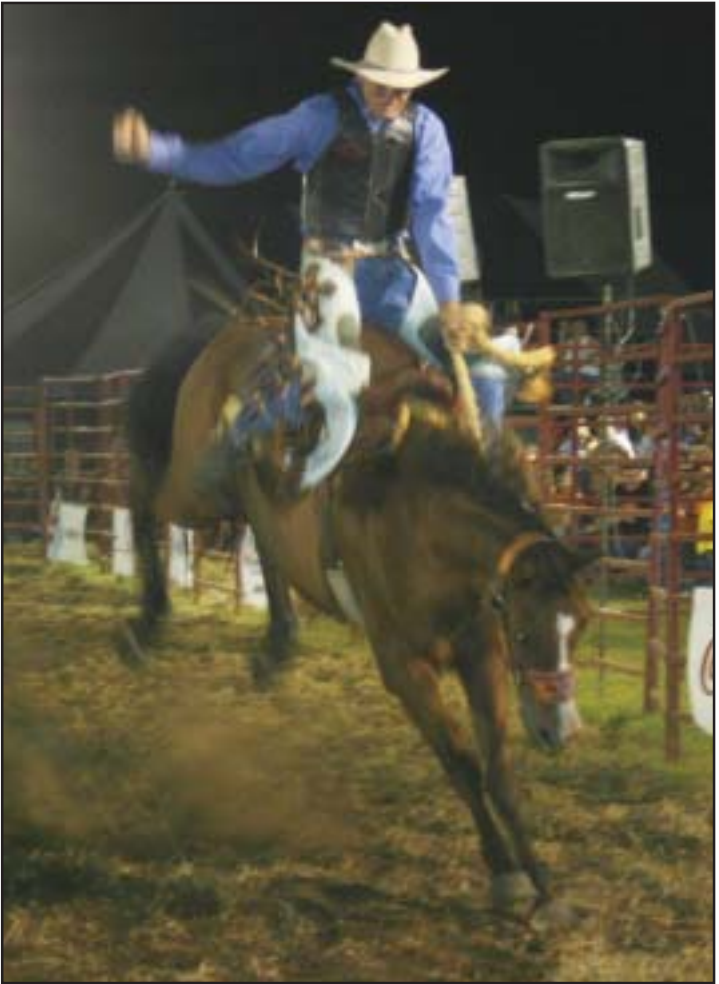
“It’s pretty fun,” said Brandon Reynolds, a bull rider from Pike Road, Ala. “You get a little bit of a rush when you’re out there.”



(Above left) A barrel racer whips past a barrel during the rodeo competition.
(Above) Ghost Dancer takes a bow during a performance of Native American heritage and beliefs.



(Above) Audience volunteers for Money the Hard Way scatter as an angry bull approaches. The goal is to remove a ribbon from around the bull’s neck. There were no serious injuries.
(Left) Mike Delaney, of Augusta, and his kids, Erin and Ryan, try to find a watermelon in the middle of the rodeo arena while blindfolded during the Watermelon Crawl competition.



Jim Burnett, a saddle bronc rider, endures a thrashing atop a bucking bronco.